

Message Text

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72

ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-07 INR-07 LAB-04

NSAE-00 SIL-01 AGR-05 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02 L-02 NSC-05

PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 /072 W

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R 281754Z APR 75

FM AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9896

INFO AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA

AMEMBASSY MANAGUA

AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE

AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR

USCINCSO

C O N F I D E N T I A L TEGUCIGALPA 1707

E.O. 71652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, ELAB, EAGR, HO

SUBJECT: FESITRANH REACTION TO GOH CHANGES

1. EARLY INDICATIONS ARE THAT FESITRANH (NORTH COAST LABOR FEDERATION) LEADERS IP HAS ONLY ONE SERIOUS RESERVATION ABOUT THE RECENT CHANGES WITHIN THE GOH, I.E., THE APPARENT INCREASE IN THE INFLUENCE OF THE CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATS. FESITRANH AND ITS CAMPESINO AFFILIATE, ANACH, SEE THE GREATEST THREAT TO THEIR INTERESTS IN THE SELECTION OF FERNANDO MONTES AS MINISTER OF NATURAL RESOURCES. THEY ALSO SEE IN THE APPOINTMENT OF VICENTE WILLIAMS, FORMER PRESIDENT OF THE CHRISTIAN-DEMOCRATIC PARTY, AS AN ADVISOR TO CHIEF OF STATE MELGAR A CONFIRMATION OF INCREASING CHRISTIAN-DEMOCRATIC INFLUENCE IN THE GOH.

2. FESITRANH HAS AN ENDURING SUSPEICION OF CHRISTIAN-DEMOCRATS, PARTICULARLY THOSE WHO LEAD THE CHRISTIAN OREINTED LABOR ORGANIZATIONS (CGT, FASH) AND THE CAMPESINO AFFILIATE (UNC). FESITRANH AND ANACH LEADERS FEAR THAT MONTES WILL USE THE RESOURCES OF HIS MINISTRY

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TO SUPPORT THE INTERESTS OF THE UNC OVER THOSE OF ANACH.

3. IN A MEETING WITH ANACH LEADERS DURING THE WEEK OF APRIL 21, MONTES REPORTEDLY SAID THAT HE (LIKE ANACH AND THE UNC) WAS OPPOSED TO THE "EMPRESAS ASOCIATIVAS" (COOPERATIVE ENTERPRISES) REQUIRED BY THE RECENT AGRARIAN REFORM LAW. HE PROPOSED THAT UNC AND ANACH FORM A UNITED FRONT TO OPPOSE THAT PROVISION OF THE LAW AND SUGGESTED THAT HE WOULD WORK WITHIN THE GOH TOWARD THE SAME END. ANACH LEADERS SUSPECT THAT MONTES IS TRYING TO USE THEIR ORGANIZATION FOR HIS OWN POLITICAL PURPOSES.

4. FESITRANH IS APPARENTLY SATISFIED WITH THE APPOINTMENT OF ENRIQUE FLORES AS LABMIN. HE IS KNOWN TO THE FEDERATION LEADERSHIP AND IS THOUGHT TO SHARE THE PRO-LABOR PHILOSOPHY OF OUTGOING LABMIN FONSECA.

5. COMMENT: THE NAMING OF FERNANDO MONTES AS MINISTER OF NATURAL RESOURCES MAY SIGNAL A FUTURE POWER STRUGGLE WITHIN THE GOH ON THE QUESTION OF AGRARIAN REFORM. MONTES REGARDS HIMSELF AS AN EXPERT ON AGRARIAN MATTERS AND HAS SPENT MANY YEARS WORKING WITH THE HONDURAN CAMPESINO. HE ALSO HOLDS A DEGREE IN AGRICULTURAL ECONOMICS. MONTES IS CLOSELY TIED TO THE CHRISTIAN-DSTOCRATIC CAMPESINO ASSOCIATION, UNC, WHICH HAS BEEN STRONGLY OPPOSED TO THE GOH AGRARIAN REFORM LAW SINCE ITS ANNOUNCEMENT. IT IS LIKELY THAT MONTES WILL USE THE RESOURCES OF HIS MINISTRY IN THE RURAL SECTOR IN A MANNER CONSISTENT WITH HIS OWN PHILOSOPHY. IF HE STRONGLY OPPOSES THE EMPRESAS ASOCIATIVAS HE IS LIKELY TO CLASH WITH EQUALLY STRONG WILLED LT. COLONEL MARIO MALDONADO, DIRECTOR INA (NATIONAL AGRARIAN INSTITUTE). SANCHEZ

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